

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Ron DeSantis
Governor

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Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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Duration of Isolation and Quarantine: School Guidance

Isolation Guidance Recommendations

Isolation is intended to keep someone who is infected with COVID-19 away from others, even in their home, so they don't spread it to others. Persons should not attend school or extracurricular activities until the criteria below is met:

- At least **10 days** have passed since COVID-19 symptoms first appeared **and**
- At least **24 hours** have passed without fever and without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved.

For COVID-19 cases who were never symptomatic, individuals should be allowed to return after at least 10 days have passed since the specimen collection date of the first positive laboratory test.

Please note that based on the recommendation from a health care professional, persons with severe illness or patients who are severely immunocompromised may need to be isolated for 20 days and require additional testing.

Quarantine Guidance Recommendations

Quarantine is intended to keep someone who might have been exposed to the virus away from others in case they develop the disease. Close contacts are those individuals who have been within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, regardless of mask usage. Close contacts are required to quarantine at home and not attend school or extracurricular activities until they've been cleared to return. In early December 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a scientific brief that provides alternatives for asymptomatic close contacts to end quarantine earlier than the previously recommended 14 days ([Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing](#)).

10 days (without testing)

- Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing, if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring, and with the following parameters in place upon return to school:
 - No symptoms of COVID-19 infection.
 - Daily self-check symptom monitoring continues through day 14, reporting immediately if symptoms do appear.
 - Adhere to recommended infection prevention strategies to include:
 - Wearing masks (correctly and consistently).

- Maintaining distancing wherever possible through [modified layouts](#) (e.g., at least 3 feet apart, no shared objects, spaced seating, seating facing one direction). Note, in areas of high community transmission, middle and high school students should be 6 feet apart, if cohorting is not possible.
- Hand hygiene and cough etiquette.
- Cleaning and disinfection protocols (e.g., regularly scheduled and consistent cleaning of high touch surfaces).
- School bus considerations should also include proper ventilation, routine cleaning and disinfection, creating distance between children on school buses (e.g. one child per row, skipping rows, children from same household seated together). Masks are required by federal order on school buses in the United States.

7 days (with testing)

- Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test performed on Day 6 or later is negative, no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring, and with the following parameters in place upon return to school:
 - No symptoms of COVID-19 infection.
 - Daily self-check symptom monitoring continues through day 14, reporting immediately if symptoms do appear.
 - Adhere to recommended infection prevention strategies to include:
 - Wearing masks (correctly and consistently).
 - Maintaining distancing wherever possible through [modified layouts](#) (e.g., at least 3 feet apart, no shared objects, spaced seating, seating facing one direction). Note, in areas of high community transmission, middle and high school students should be 6 feet apart, if cohorting is not possible.
 - Hand hygiene and cough etiquette.
 - Cleaning and disinfection protocols (e.g., regularly scheduled and consistent cleaning of high touch surfaces).
 - School bus considerations should also include proper ventilation, routine cleaning and disinfection, creating distance between children on school buses (e.g. one child per row, skipping rows, children from same household seated together). Masks are required by federal order on school buses in the United States.

Additional considerations have been provided below upon conducting follow-up with parents/guardians of school-age children who have been identified as cases or close contacts to a case of COVID-19.

Sports and Extracurricular Activities

Schools should be conducting sports and other extracurricular activities such as music programs in ways that reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Participants in activities where increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band or sports and exercise should maintain six feet of distance. In-person learning should be prioritized over in-person extracurricular activities and athletics programs. Participants in close contact team sports are often unable to maintain mitigation strategies such as social distancing. Therefore, there may need to be a longer quarantine time (i.e., 14 days)

before students are allowed to participate in extracurricular activities than for returning to in-person learning.

Interviewing

During the interview with confirmed or probable COVID-19 cases in Kindergarten–12 (K–12) school settings, the following information should be collected:

- Date of symptom onset
- For asymptomatic cases, date of specimen collection for first positive test
- Reason the case was tested (e.g., symptoms, contact to case, part of outbreak or cluster)
- Date(s) the person last worked/attended school during their infectious period
- Mode of transportation to and from the school (e.g., bus, carpool, etc.)
- Before-and after-school activities (e.g., clubs, sports, etc.)

The evaluation of the school for confirmed or probable COVID-19 cases in the K–12 school setting:

- When was the person on campus during their infectious period?
- With whom did that person come in close contact?
- Was that person with a single cohort in one classroom throughout the school day?
- Was that person mixing with other people or classrooms?
- Was there intermixing between groups or classrooms?
- How were the classrooms set up (desk separation and spacing)?

When interviewing parents/guardians who have a school-aged child who is a close contact to a household member with COVID-19, it is critical to fully assess the family's living situation. This means clearly asking about any plans they have in place to effectively separate the child under quarantine from the individual(s) with COVID-19. Questions to ask:

- Has the person with COVID-19 found somewhere else to stay during their period of isolation?
- Has the parent/guardian sent the child who is under quarantine to a family member's home while the individual with COVID-19 is isolating at their normal home?
- Can the child under quarantine use separate facilities and avoid contact with the individual with COVID-19 during their period of isolation?

The answers to these types of questions should provide insight when determining the last date of exposure for the child who is under quarantine. It should not be assumed that a household contact under quarantine must have their last date of exposure equivalent to the last date of isolation for the household member with COVID-19.

Quarantine Education

Once the last date of exposure has been established, educating parents/guardians about their child's quarantine options is critically important. All CDC-recommended options should be effectively communicated with the parent/guardian to ensure they are able to make the best choice about their child's duration of quarantine. If the parent/guardian chooses the 7-day quarantine option, assistance should be provided to them in developing a plan for the child to get tested on Day 6 of quarantine or later. The child's return-to-school letter will be contingent upon receipt of the negative PCR test result for COVID-19.